

# **FISCAL NOTE**

## **HB 771 - SB 724**

March 11, 2003

**SUMMARY OF BILL:** Requires a referral to a licensed physician for medical evaluation when an audiologist or hearing instrument specialist identifies specific conditions using a methodology developed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Prohibits the fitting of hearing instruments in these instances until a physician has recommended the fitting unless the patient declines for religious reasons. Allows appropriately trained person to perform hearing tests under the supervision of a physician as defined in the bill.

### **ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:**

#### **Increase State Expenditures - Not Significant**

This bill codifies current practice. According to the Department of Health, the best practice for an audiologist is to refer a patient to a physician when any of the conditions outlined in this bill are found. Currently the state insurance program preferred provider organization (PPO) covers examinations by an audiologist but not hearing aids. It is assumed that requiring such referrals will not significantly increase doctor visits. The amount of increase cannot be determined but is estimated to be not significant. TennCare covers examinations when they are medically necessary.

### **CERTIFICATION:**

This is to duly certify that the information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.



James A. Davenport, Executive Director